

Building Trust Exercise

From

The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business

By Patrick Lencioni

Lencioni says that the kind of trust needed to build a great team is *vulnerability-based trust*.

The balance on developing trust can be disrupted when we try to do too much too soon.

Lencioni offers a tip on how to start building vulnerability-based trust in a non-threatening way: A quick 20-minute exercise where everyone briefly tells a few details about their lives.

The questions:

- Where were you born?
- How many siblings do you have?
- What's your birth order?
- What was your most interesting or difficult challenge as a child?

This exercise helps people on a team open up about topics that others probably don't know, even if they have worked together previously. The results of this exercise can be a new level of respect and understanding within the group.

A tip from me: As the leader of this exercise or as the CEO of your organization, be the first one out of the corral with this exercise.

Take some time to think of your most embarrassing, challenging or interesting moments as a child and share them with your leadership team. Be vulnerable.

For me, it was about being pigeon-toed. I walked funny and I dragged my toes. My dad said I couldn't walk and chew bubble gum at the same time, which was true. My dad wasn't insensitive...he was only telling the truth. I wore ugly corrective shoes until I was twelve. Along with the shoes, my wardrobe was accessorized with blue cat-eyed glasses from the time I was eight. I fell frequently and had scabs that covered both knees until I was fifteen. It's truly a miracle that I can stand up at a podium to talk and not fall down.

Have fun with this exercise. You are planting the seeds for trust which leads to much bigger things!